



Safety Procedures and Resources

While it is impossible to anticipate and prevent every possible school tragedy, Tennessee school districts and schools do everything in their power to ensure the safety and security of our children. Below, please find the safety requirements already in place in Tennessee, as well as additional resources for maintaining and assessing security procedures, and talking to and supporting students.

Current procedures and requirements

- Tennessee's Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) Act requires every district to annually review, update and submit to the state the system's Emergency Preparedness Plans. These plans include visitor screening procedures, weapons reporting and bullying policies for every public school in Tennessee: http://www.tn.gov/education/safe_schls/safety_cntr/SAVE_act.shtml.
- The state awards annual grants to school districts through the Safe Schools Act of 1998. These funds are used for a variety of school safety enhancements, including School Resource Officers, security enhancements and violence prevention training: http://tn.gov/education/safe_schls/safety_cntr/safe_schls_act.shtml.
- The state provides an annual school safety institute for district personnel in charge of safety and security, and another on workplace violence training for district safety and security directors.
- Tennessee Schools Prepare is a collaboration between Vanderbilt University and the Tennessee Department of Education which supports schools in the development of effective crisis response teams and strategies: <http://www.tnschoolsprepare.com>.

Resources for districts, schools and parents

- The U.S. Department of Education also has several resources on [Creating and Updating School Emergency Management Plans](http://rems.ed.gov/CreatingAndUpdatingSchoolEmergencyManagementPlans.aspx). Plans should be comprehensive, anticipate a variety of hazards, and focus on the four phases of emergency management: prevention-mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery: <http://rems.ed.gov/CreatingAndUpdatingSchoolEmergencyManagementPlans.aspx>.
- The National Association of School Psychologists provides a comprehensive set of web-based resources, including *Tips for School Administrators for Reinforcing School Safety*: <http://www.nasponline.org>.

- The National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities (NCEF) website provides a free, frequently updated [checklist](http://www.ncef.org/safeschools/index.cfm) that combines the nation's best school facility assessment measures into one online source for assessing the safety and security of school buildings and grounds, communications systems and building access control and surveillance:
<http://www.ncef.org/safeschools/index.cfm>.
- As hard as it is to talk among adults about such a tragedy, it can be even more difficult to talk with students and our own children. [Helping Youth and Children Recover from Traumatic Events](http://rems.ed.gov/HelpingYouthandChildrenRecoverFromTraumaticEvents.aspx) is a compilation of resources from the U.S. Department of Education, other federal agencies, and counseling experts:
<http://rems.ed.gov/HelpingYouthandChildrenRecoverFromTraumaticEvents.aspx>.
- In 2010, the Tennessee Department of Education was charged with developing a workplace violence training initiative. Developed by the nationally-recognized Threat Assessment Group, the training is particularly appropriate for directors of schools. Four of these comprehensive training episodes were offered during the 2011-12 school year and one additional training is scheduled for February 26-27 in Nashville:
http://www.tn.gov/education/safe_schls/training_calendar.shtml
- Two websites are available for school counselors: *The Parents Guidelines for Helping Youth and Talking to Children about the Shooting* from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network:
<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/terrorism>. The National Association of School Psychologists also offers online resources: <http://www.nasponline.org>.

Safety Summit

- Following the unthinkable tragedy that recently took place in Newtown, Connecticut, the Tennessee Department of Education is joining with districts across the state to examine and strengthen the current safety protocols in Tennessee schools. The department will hold a statewide School Safety Summit in late January, hosted by Williamson County Schools. We will gather hundreds of district and community leaders from across Tennessee to discuss how to ensure the proper training and implementation of safety measures in schools.